

National Weather Service Weather Forecast Office Milwaukee/Sullivan, WI

2012 Wisconsin Tornadoes - 4 Confirmed in 2012 (Updated 9/10)

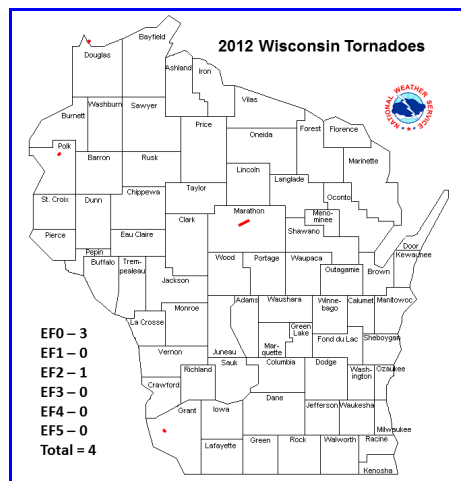
Updated to include a link to a [Top News Story on the May 24th Marathon County tornado](#)

It continues to be a relatively quiet and interesting year for tornadoes in Wisconsin. However, we doubt anyone is complaining about the lack of tornadoes.

Preliminarily, through September 4th, only four tornadoes have been documented in Wisconsin (no fatalities or injuries):

1. May 24th - Marathon County - EF0 (701-707 pm) - 3.7 SSE Marathon to 4.8 ENE Marathon. Path length 5.94 miles and max width 75 yards. Damage to trees only. For more information and a picture of the this tornado, click [here](#).
2. May 27th - Polk County - EF0 (813-815 pm) - 1.8 NNE Luck to 2.0 NE Luck. Path length 0.19 mile and max width 25 yards. No damage - it was in a marsh.
3. Aug 9th - Douglas County - EF0 (1111-1120 am) - Duluth/Superior Harbor Airport area and Barkers Island. To read story and see pictures click [here](#).
4. Sep 4th - Grant County - EF2 (around 740 pm) - near Bloomington. To read story and see pictures click [here](#). (Strongest in Wisconsin in 2012, so far)

Below is a simple plot of 2012 tornado positions in Wisconsin. Click on image for larger version.



Comparing yearly Wisconsin tornado counts for January through September

If we make it to the end of September with only 4 confirmed tornadoes, the year of 2012 will be tied with 1953 for the 2nd fewest number of tornadoes in Wisconsin for the first nine months of a year. Through the end of September... 1952 had the fewest with one tornado.

Below is a listing of calendar years with tornado totals of 9 or less for the first nine months of a year in Wisconsin, and the subsequent yearly total of tornadoes documented for those years. In most of the years, there were no additional tornadoes after September. The years prior to 1950 were not considered since tornado documentation wasn't complete.

Year	Jan - Sep Total	Yearly Total
2012	4	?
1995	7	7
1990	9	9
1975	8	8
1962	7	9

1961	9	9
1953	4	4
1956	7	7
1955	9	9
1952	1	1
1951	5	5
1950	6	6

Comparing yearly Wisconsin tornado counts for January through August

We made it to the end of August with only 3 confirmed tornadoes, the year of 2012 was tied with 1961 for the 3rd fewest number of tornadoes in Wisconsin for the first eight months of a year. Through the end of August, 1952 had the fewest with one tornado, and 1951 had only two.

Below is a listing of calendar years with **tornado totals of 5 or less for the first eight months of a year in Wisconsin**, and the subsequent yearly total of tornadoes documented for those years. The years prior to 1950 were not considered since tornado documentation wasn't complete.

Year	Jan - Aug Total	Yearly Total
2012	3	?
1995	5	7
1990	4	9
1961	3	9
1953	4	4
1952	1	1
1951	2	5
1950	5	6

Monthly Wisconsin Tornado Statistics - 1844 to Present

The recent September 4, 2012, EF2 tornado in Grant County was the 126th documented tornado in the month of September in Wisconsin's recorded history. About 8.4 percent of all of Wisconsin's documented tornadoes occurred in the month of September, or the 5th busiest month. In contrast, June has had 430 tornadoes or about 28.8 percent of the total of 1495 tornadoes. Not that the months of October, November, December, January, and February had only about 3.2 percent of all Wisconsin tornadoes.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Totals	3	0	18	117	238	430	325	197	126	30	9	6	1495
% Total	0.2%	0.0%	1.2%	7.8%	15.9%	28.8%	21.7%	13.2%	8.4%	2.0%	0.6%	0.4%	

Last Violent (EF4 or EF5) September Tornado in Wisconsin

On September 26, 1951, an estimated F4 tornado had a 22.3 mile track through the counties of Portage and Waupaca. It left behind 6 fatalities and 2 injured people. This tornado may be the strongest documented tornado in September in Wisconsin. The NWS didn't systematically rate tornadoes until 1982, therefore, the September 26th tornado's rating is only a rough estimate based on the damage reports. No EF5 tornadoes have been documented in September in Wisconsin.

Last Strong (EF3) September Tornado in Wisconsin

On September 2, 2002, an EF3 tornado struck Ladysmith in Rusk County. It injured 27 people and left behind about \$25 Million in damage.

Last Strong (EF2) September Tornado in Wisconsin

Prior to the Sep 4, 2012, Grant County EF2 tornado, the last strong tornado in September in Wisconsin was on September 30, 2002, when an EF2 tornado occurred about 4 to 8 miles west of Tomahawk in Lincoln County. There were no injuries or deaths.

Last September Tornadoes in the 5 NWS Service Areas in Wisconsin

WFO Milwaukee/Sullivan: September 27, 2007, EF0 tornado about 3.5 miles east of North Cape in Racine County.

WFO Green Bay: September 13, 2005, EF0 tornado in De Pere to Allouez area of Brown County.

WFO La Crosse: September 13, 2005, EF0 tornado 3N Holmen to 3SW Stevenstown in La Crosse County.

WFO Minneapolis/Chanhassen: September 23, 2006, EF0 tornado 3NW Roberts.

WFO Duluth: September 6, 1995, F1 tornado 4S Prentice in Price County.

Yearly Breakdown of Wisconsin Tornado Ratings 1982- Present

The NWS began rating tornadoes in 1982. Below is the Wisconsin yearly breakdown.

Year	F0	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	Total
1982	1	9	6	0	0	0	16
1983	16	10	3	1	1	0	31
1984	10	8	10	3	2	1	34
1985	3	7	6	0	0	0	16
1986	4	4	5	1	0	0	14
1987	8	8	0	0	0	0	16
1988	8	19	7	1	0	0	35
1989	9	7	1	0	0	0	17
1990	0	6	3	0	0	0	9
1991	5	3	2	0	0	0	10
1992	6	16	2	2	0	0	26
1993	27	9	1	0	0	0	37
1994	8	18	6	2	1	0	35
1995	5	2	0	0	0	0	7
1996	11	7	2	0	0	1	21
1997	6	6	2	0	0	0	14
1998	16	3	3	2	0	0	24
1999	8	2	0	0	0	0	10
2000	11	6	1	0	0	0	18
2001	7	4	0	1	0	0	12
2002	18	5	2	1	0	0	26
2003	10	4	0	0	0	0	14
2004	22	10	2	2	0	0	36
2005	43	16	2	1	0	0	62
2006	10	2	0	0	0	0	12
2007	13	3	1	1	0	0	18
2008	23	13	1	1	0	0	38
2009	11	5	0	0	0	0	16
2010	17	24	5	0	0	0	46
2011	13	17	7	1	0	0	38
2012	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
Total	352	253	81	20	4	2	712
	F0	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	

Strong (EF2 or 3) or Violent (EF4 or 5) in Wisconsin in Months of October, November, December, January (1950 - Present)

October 3, 1979 - Pierce County (estimated F2)

October 16, 1984 - Juneau County (F2), 2S Mauston to 2E Necedah (no fatalities but 3 injured people)

November 1, 1971 - Rock County (estimated F2), 3 to 4NE Beloit (1 injured person)

November 15, 1960 - Rock County (estimated F2), 1.5N Union

November 15, 1960 - Clark into Marathon County (estimated F2), 2NW Chili to 5W Wausau (one injured person)

December 1, 1970 - Waupaca into Shawano County (estimated F2), 4NW Iola to Pella

December 1, 1970 - Outagamie into Shawano County (estimated F2), Median to Black Creek to southeast Shawano County

December 1, 1970 - Wood County (estimated F2), 2SE Arpin

January 7, 2008 - Walworth into Kenosha County (EF3), 2.3NE Pell Lake to 1.6NNW Paddock Lake (15 injured people and \$13.8 Million in damage)

January 7, 2008 - Kenosha County (EF1), 2..5SE Somers to 3.6N Kenosha

Wisconsin Tornado Statistics - Monthly Averages & Facts

Currently, Wisconsin averages 23 tornadoes per year, based on the climate normal period of 1981-2010. As seen from the above tables, none of these years came near the yearly average number of tornadoes after such a slow

start. Overall, the numbers suggest that the total number of tornadoes for 2012 will be below the average of 23, but nothing is guaranteed.

Average 1981-2010 (Official)

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
0.1	0.0	0.2	1.2	3.4	7.5	5.6	3.1	1.8	0.3	0.1	0.0	23.1

Most in one year = 62 in 2005

Least in one year = 1 in 1952. There were years with "zero" tornadoes back in the mid-1800s through the 1940s but they are not considered due to incomplete documentation, lack of reports from individuals who witnessed the tornadoes, lack of awareness and training....as well as a lack of organized severe weather spotters.

Most in one month = 30 in June 2005

Most on one calendar day = 27 on August 18, 2005

Most consecutive days with tornadoes = 5, from July 4-8, 1994

Only month with no documented tornadoes = February

Longest tracked tornado = 170 miles, April 5, 1929, from southwest of River Falls (Pierce Co.) to Van Buskirk (Iron Co.).

Deadliest tornado = "New Richmond Tornado" on Jun 12, 1899 (St. Croix Co.). 117 deaths and 125 injured

Costliest tornado = "F5 Barneveld Tornado" on June 8, 1984, \$88.5 Million in 2012 dollars adjusted for inflation. \$40 Million in 1984 dollars. The F5 Oakfield tornado had a \$40.4 Million damage estimate in 1996 dollars which translates to \$59.2 Million in 2012 dollars. There were three other costly tornadoes for which decent estimates are not available: The New Richmond tornado, the September 9, 1884 St. Croix-Barron-Polk County tornado and the June 4, 1958 St. Croix-Dunn tornado.

Most-recent violent tornado = "F5 Oakfield Tornado" on July 18, 1996, in Fond du Lac County.

"Average Wisconsin tornado" = lasts about 7 minutes in duration, path length of 3.5 to 4 miles, maximum width about 125 yards, EF1 rating (winds 86 to 110 mph).

AFK/ET

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